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ABSTRACT

Teachers have a stake in determining the qualifications of evaluators of teacher effectiveness. Teachers are justified in demanding that the evaluators be highly competent and well trained, especially when judgments about a teacher's worth or merit are being made. To the extent that administrators must be confindent that the evaluations on which they make decisions are valid, they, too, have a stake in appraising an evaluator's qualifications. Within this context, three methods of evaluating teacher effectiveness--Criterion-Referenced Supervision, Instructional Management Systems, and Teaching Performance Tests--are discussed. Each discussion includes suggestions or questions that may be raised by teachers about the method for appraising teacher effectiveness. (LC)

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APPRAISING THE EVALUATORS

Much is written about evaluating the effectiveness of teachers in teaching pupils. So frequently, teachers have been singled out for pupils not having learned the three r's (reading, writing, and arithmetic). Little, if any blame, is given to parents, administrators and supervisors, as well as members of school boards of education pertaining to perceived weaknesses in the instructional arena. Certainly, a wholistic approach needs to be utilized to appraise learner progress. The teacher has major responsibilities in guiding pupils to achieve optimally, but so do other individuals and groups in society. Duckett, Strother, and Gephart write the following:

> Most of the time when we say "evaluation of teaching" our focus is on the teacher and his or her performance. This time we want to turn the spotlight on the evaluator. Who are the evaluators? What professional tasks do they perform? What knowledge, skills, and attitudes must they have to insure that they will perform their tasks in a highly competent manner?
>
> Teachers have the right to know who is evaluating them and what their qualifications are. Obviously, many people evaluate teachers-students, fellow teachers, administrators and supervisors, parents, lawmakers, board members, etc. When decisions are made based on someone's judgement about a teacher's worth and merit, the teacher is fully justified in asking about the qualifications of the evaluator. The teacher is justified in demanding that only evaluations that are done by qualified people be used in those decisions. Many teachers feel threatened by evaluation and that is understandable, but apprehension and anxiety are not inherent in evaluation. Most teachers will view evaluation as a positive element of their professional lives when they have confidence that their evaluators are highly competent and well trained for the job.
>
> Teachers aren't the only ones who have high stakes in the quality of evaluation. Administrators, for example, can be confident of their teaching staffs only to the degree that the evaluations on which they base their decisions are valid.

There are diverse proposals pertaining to evaluating teacher effectiveness in teaching. Selected methods will now be discussed.

[1]Duckett, et. al., "Evaluating the Evaluators", Practical Applications of Research, March, 1982, page 1.

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Criterion-Referenced Supervision

A supervisor or principal using a criterion-referenced strategy in appraising teacher progress in teaching emphasizes the utilization of behaviorally stated (measurable) objectives in each lesson. Thus, the teacher needs to be proficient in writing these precise objectives. Adequate time needs to be given to decide which objectives are salient to emphasize in each lesson and which are of lesser value and will not be stressed in teaching and learning. Next, the teacher must choose learning activities to guide each learner to attain the prized objectives. Evaluation procedures need to be selected which will aid in determining if each pupil has or has not achieved viable ends.

The criterion-referenced supervisor, prior to observing the teacher teach, evaluates the quality of objectives in the lesson plan with direct teacher involvement. The criterion-referenced supervisor then:

1. notes the quality or worth of each objective.
2. suggests alternative goals, if deemed necessary.
3. notices if pupils have attained the precise ends as a result of instruction.
4. gives suggestions for alternative learning activities if objectives have not been attained by students.

Questions that may be raised pertaining to criterion-referenced means of appraising instruction include the following:

1. Do supervisors possess adequate subject matter knowledge to truly suggest more worthwhile objectives, as compared to those listed by the teacher?
2. Do supervisors possess traits of suggesting, rather than dictating objectives?
3. Do supervisors possess an adequate knowledge of diverse activities and experiences available to/for learners?
4. Is it possible for a supervisor to notice if each and every pupil has attained one or more objectives, as a result of the teacher, teaching a lesson. For example, a few pupils may not have achieved

an end in the alloted lesson time; however, with a modified teaching strategy, these same students might achieve successful goal attainment.

Instructional Management Systems

There are selected educators who recommend utilizing Instructional Management Systems(IMS) to appraise teacher effectiveneness. IMS, as does criterion-referenced supervision, makes use of measurably stated, and not general goals. IMS advocates believe that measurable ends need to be determined in writing in an hierachical arrangement. The ends then move from that which is simple to increasingly more complex learnings. Generally, a committee of teachers with, perhaps, supervisory guidance, will choose the desired objectives.

Pupils may move forward on an individual basis in attaining the stated goals. Learner progress in successfully attaining an objective must be measured before the next ordered end is attempted. The teacher must keep written products and other available evidence of pupil success in achieving each sequential objective. Evidence may be placed in a separate folder for each pupil. Thus, administrators, supervisors, and parents may be able to observe if a pupil is/is not successful in learning.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education publication entitled Instructional Management states the following:

> There are many organizational patterns which might be called an instructional management system. Missouri's concept of the IMS combines two techniques which are mutually supportive: the theory of teaching to objectives and the theory of mastery learning.
>
> Teaching to objectives simply means that each subject is broken down into "bite-sized" skills or bits of knowledge which can easily be communicated by teachers to students and parents. These clearly defined "bits of knowledge" (objectives) provide specific goals for students and clarify what they are expected to do. Use of specific objectives also provides teachers a logical way of planning

[2]Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Box 480, Jefferson City, Missouri, 1981.

and organizing instructional activities. Followed in sequence and added together, the individual objectives accumulate to produce a comprehensive body of knowledge or a skill such as reading or arithmetic.

Mastery teaching describes a process in which students are given all the time and instruction they need to master each simple skill or to learn each bit of knowledge. Students may not advance to more complex skills until they show on a test or by demonstration that they have mastered the simple ones. This ensures that students are not asked to perform schoolwork beyond their capabilities.

Teaching Performance Tests

James Popham from the University of California has been a leading advocate in testing teacher effectiveness in the actual teaching of students. Advocates of using teaching performance tests believe that an evaluator can appraise if teachers are or are not doing well in teaching-learning situations. Predetermined student measurably stated objectives must be developed by administrators and supervisors. The objectives are then presented to teachers in order that the latter may select learning activities to guide students to attain the precise ends. A manual containing needed subject matter, directly related to the precise ends, is also given to the teacher. Sometimes, a sample of test items is included with the predetermined objectives and the manual. Thus, the teacher may notice how learners are to be appraised, as a result of teaching.

After adequate time to prepare the lesson for teaching, the teacher is provided a given set of students to teach in the testing situation. The students selected must be ready for achieving the stated objectives. However, the involved learners should not have attained the ends prior to teaching. After instruction, pupils are tested to notice if the predetermined objectives have been achieved. Quality teachers are able to guide learners to achieve the predetermined objectives. Less successful teachers, in the teaching performance test, may need inservice education opportunities to upgrade teaching skills.

To be increasingly reliable, each teacher should take more than one teaching performance test. James Popham[3] lists the following steps to follow for instructional improvement and skills assessment of teachers:

1. Allow sufficient planning time for the teacher.
2. Use naive but teachable learners.
3. Use small or large groups of learners.
4. Item sampling post tests may be used.
5. Routinely assess learner affect.

Popham notes for instructional improvement:

1. Clinical observers should conduct instructional analysis on the basis of learner performance.
2. Provide opportunities for re-planning and re-teaching of unsuccessful lessons.

In regard to skills assessment, Popham lists:

1. All relevant conditions should be comparable for each teacher.
2. Assign learners to teachers randomly.
3. More than one performance test should be completed by each teacher.
4. Preserve test security.

Questions which might be raised pertaining to use of teaching performance tests to appraise teaching quality might include the following:

1. Who is to determine which measurable goals learners are to attain in testing situations?
2. How might learners be selected for teaching who are ready for achieving the chosen ends, but have not attained the specific objectives prior to instruction? There is a delicate situation here in selecting learners for instructional purposes.
3. How is validity and reliability of the testing instruments to be determined?
4. Which criteria may be followed to ascertain if teachers are doing well in daily teaching and not solely on teaching performance tests.

[3]W. James Popham, Using Teaching Performance Tests for Instructional Improvement and Skills Assessment. Filmstrip and tape. Los Angelos, California, 1971

In Summary

There are numerous innovational strategies available to appraise teacher performance. Each appraisal procedure needs to be evaluated in terms of its strengths and weaknesses. With much emphasis being placed upon appraising teaching performance, instruments utilized need to be valid and reliable.

Selected References

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